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REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS MADE IN IMPLEMENTING THE BUENOS AIRES PLAN OF ACTION, THE DECISIONS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SOUTH COMMISSION

SUMMARY

The present report is submitted in compliance with paragraph 17 of decision 10/1 A adopted by the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries at its tenth session.

It analyses the responses to the questionnaire prepared by the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) soliciting information on various issues relevant to the promotion and implementation of TCDC. It also reviews the contributions made by the developing countries, donors, intergovernmental organizations, agencies of the United Nations system, the United Nations Development Programme and the Special Unit. It concludes that since the tenth session of the High-level Committee, a number of significant TCDC initiatives have been undertaken.

The report suggests, nevertheless, that in face of the challenges presented by globalization, the developing countries and their development partners need to redouble their efforts in order to ensure that TCDC becomes a truly dynamic instrument in the service of development and also serves as the basis for the establishment of new and more effective patterns of international development cooperation.

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 6	3
II.	HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL AND BILATERAL ACTIVITIES	7 - 46	4
	A. Developing countries	7 - 38	4
	B. Developed countries	39 - 46	11
III.	SUPPORT BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS	47 - 51	12
IV.	SUPPORT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM	52 - 79	14
	A. United Nations organizations and agencies	52 - 71	14
	B. United Nations Development Programme and the Special Unit for TCDC	72 - 79	17
V.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	80 - 86	20
Annex.	The countries and organizations that responded to the questionnaire		23

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with decision 10/1 A, taken by the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) at its tenth session,[1] in which, inter alia, the Committee requested the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to submit to it at its eleventh session a comprehensive report on the progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries[2] on a global and United Nations system-wide basis for the period 1997-1999.[3]

2. In preparing this report, the Special Unit for TCDC drew on three primary sources - namely, information received in response to the biennial questionnaires, which was prepared by the Special Unit and sent to all developing and developed country member States, all United Nations system organizations and agencies, including regional commissions, and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; information generated from activities sponsored by the Special Unit; and other relevant information obtained from the public domain through formal and informal contacts.

3. For the purpose of this report and in keeping with the new directions for TCDC, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995,[4] a number of modifications and refinements were introduced in the questionnaires circulated by the Special Unit as the basis for the current report. The revised questionnaire focused on the following topics:

(a) The formulation and adoption by national Governments of policies to promote and utilize the TCDC modality;

(b) The improvement of institutional capacities for the management of TCDC activities, with special emphasis on the effectiveness of national TCDC focal points;

(c) Resource mobilization and innovative financing of TCDC activities;

(d) Information on current bilateral and multilateral TCDC agreements;

(e) Sharing of knowledge and best practices through networking and the use of information technology, including the use of the TCDC information referral system (INRES);

(f) Progress on implementation of the New Directions strategy;

(g) Constraints and limitations hampering the full utilization and mainstreaming of the TCDC modality;

(h) Proven methodologies and recommendations to further develop and expand TCDC as an effective and efficient means of South/South developmental cooperation.

4. Altogether, replies were received from 60 developing countries, four developed countries, 23 United Nations organizations and agencies, and 19 intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations. Although the responses fell short of expectations, they did reflect a significant increase, compared to previous years, both in quantity and in quality of TCDC activities undertaken on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

5. In view of the above, the present report can be read with the following caveats. First, the report, as a whole, is based primarily on information made available or accessible to the Special Unit for TCDC, which may not necessarily reflect the whole picture on TCDC activities carried out globally. Secondly, the information captured in the report provides only highlights with representative examples, rather than an exhaustive listing of all reported TCDC undertakings. Thirdly, the broad conclusions and recommendations contained in the report should be considered in conjunction with those in the report on progress made in the implementation of the new directions strategy (TCDC/11/2).

6. The report is presented in five parts, as follows: introduction; highlights of national and bilateral activities in support of TCDC during the reporting period; highlights of TCDC support by intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations; highlights of support by the multilateral system for TCDC; and conclusions and recommendations for improved TCDC on a global and United Nations system-wide basis.

II. HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL AND BILATERAL ACTIVITIES

A. Developing countries

7. From the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the overriding principle of TCDC - as reflected in the various resolutions of the General Assembly adopted on the subject - has been that primary responsibility for ensuring an effective developmental role for TCDC rests with the developing countries themselves. In practice, the occurrence of spontaneous, self-generated bilateral cooperation initiatives between two or more developing countries did not take root immediately. Owing to a variety of barriers - chiefly a lingering cultural resistance to South/South collaboration and also to funding and structural limitations - the TCDC process was slow to develop on a bilateral basis. Over time, these interventions achieved gradual but steady success in demonstrating to the country participants that bilateral projects involving South/South technical and economic cooperation could bring effective - and cost-efficient - results over and above conventional North/South aid and development assistance programmes.

8. Today, TCDC involves a wide range of players and configurations, including extensive participation by many developing countries in direct bilateral programmes. Since the last meeting of the High-level Committee, a core group of TCDC-active countries has emerged. They have expressed their preparedness to serve as "pivotal countries", following a recommendation contained in the new directions strategy. These countries, currently 23 in number, from Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, met in Chile in November 1997, under the auspices of the Government of Chile and

the Special Unit for TCDC. The meeting developed some broad guidelines for how countries could play a pivotal role in TCDC.

9. In reviewing bilateral TCDC, it is also possible to describe country activities based on regional groupings. During the reporting period, countries in the Asia and the Pacific region were the most active in self-generated bilateral TCDC activities. This was true by all measures, including the number of countries offering programmes, the budgetary funding allocated to TCDC by the participating Governments, and the number of other developing countries benefiting from the technical exchanges. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the two largest countries, Argentina and Brazil, have provided significant support for technical cooperation projects over the years, as described in previous reports prepared by the Special Unit. During the current reporting period, several additional Latin American countries began to play a more active role in advancing South/South cooperation. In recent years and, more particularly, since the last meeting of the High-level Committee in 1997, several countries of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States have embarked on various forms of horizontal cooperation. This has taken place both among themselves as a region and extra-regionally, especially with countries in Latin America. As awareness of the importance of TCDC increases in the Arab States region, the level of TCDC application by the countries there has also been rising during the reporting period. In the case of African countries, spontaneous, self-funded bilateral TCDC activities also remained relatively low during the reporting period. This has traditionally been caused by difficult economic and other conditions prevailing throughout much of the region which have hampered the development of necessary institutional support mechanisms for TCDC activities. The following paragraphs provide highlights of bilateral cooperation activities by selected developing countries across all regions.

Asia and the Pacific

10. Pakistan earmarked US$ 500,000 in its 1998-1999 national budget to fund TCDC activities. Emphasis was placed on training exercises with countries from Africa, South-East Asia and the Middle East. Altogether, in recent years, Pakistan has provided training for participants from 63 developing countries. So far, Pakistan has focused on subject-specific topics which include banking, railway management, postal services administration, medicine, and engineering. In the case of the Central Asian Republics, Pakistan has provided training in police and customs administration, management of the foreign services, telecommunications development and coastal management. Under its TCDC assistance programme, Pakistan has provided professional training for approximately 7,000 students from 36 developing countries. During the reporting period, Pakistan sent programming missions to Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Egypt to identify additional TCDC cooperation opportunities. As a pivotal country, Pakistan indicated its willingness to support TCDC cooperation exchanges across a wide range of subject specialties - including agriculture, livestock development, environmental management, small and medium-sized enterprises, steel production, civil aviation, energy, water resources management, manufacturing, mining, transportation and communications.

11. Like Pakistan, Indonesia allocated $500,000 from its national budget for the promotion of TCDC. The Government's allocation was supplemented by a

contribution of $400,000 from the UNDP country allocation and $500,000 from the Government of Japan. Indonesia carried out programming missions in several African countries aimed at transferring expertise in the agricultural sector. In addition, it participated in a rural development and resettlement project in Cambodia, carried out in collaboration with other member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) - Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand - with triangular funding provided by the Government of Japan. In its capacity as a pivotal country, Indonesia indicated its willingness to support technical exchanges in agriculture, health, mining, energy development, the management of public works and family planning.

12. Thailand sponsored a number of TCDC initiatives during the reporting period. Altogether, 128 participants from other developing countries have been granted fellowships for study in various fields. Thailand also concluded with China a scientific agreement which provides for exchange visits and joint research arrangements between the countries, using the TCDC modality. Thailand indicated its areas of expertise for sponsoring TCDC exchanges as agriculture, education and health.

13. Bangladesh was a bilateral partner in TCDC activities during the reporting period through cooperation agreements with China, Thailand, India, Singapore, Malaysia and Pakistan in micro credit, rural banking and innovative income-generation activities.

14. Sri Lanka allocated approximately $500,000 in its 1998 budget to finance TCDC cooperation activities. In addition, approximately $200,000 was provided under the UNDP country allocation to support an umbrella TCDC project. Within that framework, Sri Lanka pursued an active programme of cooperation with China, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and Singapore. On a regional basis, Sri Lanka also participated in South/South trade arrangements under the South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) and the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), which serve as the major organizations facilitating regional trade in South Asia.

15. China has maintained a consistent record of commitment to TCDC over many years. China established a network of 15 research and development centres to promote programmes of TCDC and economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) and allocated more than $1 million to enable the centres to provide training for participants from developing countries. It also earmarked funds under the UNDP country allocation in support of the effort. Since the last High-level Committee meeting, China has organized 18 training workshops, involving over 400 trainees from 63 developing countries on a global basis, including Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Subject specialties have included hybrid rice production, crop protection, environmental preservation, biogas technology, the control of desertification, weather forecasting and the maintenance of agricultural machinery. China also concluded specific bilateral agreements with Pakistan in civil aviation; with India in the area of small hydropower development; and with Mongolia in the energy sector. China indicated that, as a pivotal country, it will sponsor TCDC initiatives in small hydropower development, bamboo breeding and product processing, renewable energy (solar, wind and biomass), freshwater fishing, sericulture, and meat processing. To further this commitment, China said it

intends to host 14 TCDC training workshops for approximately 300 participants from developing countries during the current year.

16. The Philippines was active in bilateral TCDC projects during the reporting period. During several years of bilateral exchanges, the Government has sponsored over 800 participants from 66 developing countries in training programmes, in areas ranging from agriculture, economic planning, environmental management, natural resources exploration, power and energy development, science and technology, trade and industry, and weather forecasting, to women in development.

17. Singapore has provided consistent support for bilateral TCDC initiatives. Its commitment to TCDC and ECDC is reflected in a dedicated publication focusing on technical cooperation, entitled Holding Hands, Making Friends, published in 1996. The booklet sets out the country's philosophy of South/South cooperation and provides comprehensive data on the various fields of cooperation it has supported and the number and types of training provided to other developing countries. Through the Singapore Cooperation Programme, which was established in 1992, Singapore has sponsored training courses and study visits for over 6,000 participants from 101 developing countries. In 1998, through the Singapore Cooperation Programme and the UNDP TCDC programme for the Caribbean, Singapore provided training to about 100 experts from the developing Caribbean island States in six areas - information technology, civil aviation, building services, environmental technology, urban management, and telecommunication. As a pivotal country, Singapore has committed itself to providing training in all areas in which it has competence.

Latin America and the Caribbean

18. The Brazilian Cooperation Agency, in coordination with the executive secretariat of the Community of Lusophone African Countries and with the support of UNDP and the Department for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, organized a seminar to identify technical cooperation opportunities among Portuguese-speaking countries and to formulate proposals related to the strengthening of the institutional capacities of the Lusophone African countries in areas related to public administration and private-sector development. In 1998, Brazil continued its collaboration with selected Portuguese-speaking African countries (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe) under a project supported by the Special Unit for TCDC on training in the integrated development of cassava.

19. Among countries from Latin America and the Caribbean, Peru participated during the reporting period in a wide range of technical exchanges with countries in the region - including Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Uruguay - in agriculture, fisheries development, industrial development, reform of the state and medicine. During the period 1997-1998, Peru sponsored TCDC missions to Bolivia, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and Uruguay, while it hosted missions from Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico and Mali.

20. Cuba also succeeded in diversifying its TCDC cooperation activities within the region. In addition to providing TCDC assistance to other countries, Cuba

also benefited from a programme of exchange with other Latin American countries specifically addressing issues of national economic management. The programme - an example of "triangular cooperation" involving additional support from an advanced country - is supported by UNDP, the Special Unit for TCDC and the Government of Norway.

21. Costa Rica, a pivotal country in Latin America, was involved in a number of regional TCDC exchanges, with Barbados, Bolivia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Peru, in areas such as health, education, ecotourism, environment, the establishment of agricultural cooperatives, justice and administration.

22. In the Latin American region, Panama established regional cooperation arrangements with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay in such areas as airport construction and management, telecommunications, science and technology, environmental statistics, cultural tourism, the development of geographical information systems and industrial reconversion. Paraguay, meanwhile, benefited from technical exchanges with Chile and Mexico, while El Salvador concluded TCDC agreements with Argentina, Brazil and Chile.

23. Within the framework of the Organization of American States (OAS), Mexico funded TCDC programmes specifically designed to support productive sectors in less developed countries in the region.

24. Argentina, which had been active predominantly in South America, in traditional TCDC activities involving exchanges of experts and study tours, initiated activities in the English-speaking Caribbean States and selected sub-Saharan and Eastern European countries under its Fund for Horizontal Cooperation. It also diversified its approach to sponsoring subject-specific TCDC activities that involved more developing countries. A case in point was the organization of a forum on the subject of reform which involved seven African countries - Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

25. A development also worthy of note in the Latin American region was the outcome of activities carried out in 1995 on behalf of the Government of Haiti through the joint sponsorship of the Special Unit, the Latin American Economic System and the UNDP country office in Haiti. The exercise resulted in more than 200 technical cooperation agreements between Haiti and a number of partners, including Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Venezuela on a wide range of subjects. To date, including the current reporting period, 104 TCDC exchanges have been successfully concluded in such areas as project evaluation, ecotourism, central banking, micro-enterprise development, coffee production, biodiversity, biotechnology, customs administration, ecological zoning, the control of desertification and the management of water basins.

26. Use of the regional approach in the Latin American and Caribbean region was effectively supported by the Latin American Economic System, which demonstrated a strong commitment to this form of cooperation. The countries of the region also benefited from the analytical work carried out by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in support of programmes designed to promote intensified patterns of cooperation. Similar support was received from

the Organization of American States (OAS) which established a special fund to promote South/South cooperation.

Africa

27. Senegal cooperated closely with Comoros, Djibouti, Gabon, Mali and Nigeria and also with Algeria, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia in a series of bilateral TCDC cooperation agreements by which Senegal provided training in human resources development. Senegal was a net beneficiary country under training programmes offered by China, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Morocco, Thailand and Turkey.

28. Nigeria engaged in an exchange of experts in agriculture, industry, private-sector development, investment and trade promotion. In terms of inbound expertise, Nigerian technicians benefited from research training and study tours in China, India, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey and Uganda.

29. Uganda carried out a number of bilateral activities during the reporting period. Small-scale training exercises taught skills to Ugandans in the areas of agricultural machinery maintenance, agricultural cultivation, small hydropower generation, aquaculture, biomass technology and food preparation. Cooperation activities took place with China, Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria, Singapore, the United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand and Turkey.

30. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has played an active supporting role in African countries, supplementing the relative scarcity of resources available to carry out bilateral agreements. During the reporting period, ECA sponsored TCDC initiatives in a range of fields, including cartography, remote sensing, socio-economic planning and management, trade and finance, mining and transport. The Commission also supported activities dealing with the promotion of the private sector and industrial development. In keeping with that objective, it has planned a number of TCDC exchanges involving African and Asian entrepreneurs which will be carried out during the period 1999-2004. OAU reported that it is currently engaged in the process of strengthening its own internal capacity with the express intention of providing increased support for South/South cooperation.

Arab States

31. There is wide variation among the Arab States in terms of application of the TCDC modality. The countries that have been most active in applying the modality, based on available information, are Egypt, Lebanon, Somalia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. Many TCDC activities have, however, remained at the level of workshops, conferences, study tours, subject-specific training and utilization of volunteers from other developing countries.

32. Through the Egyptian Fund for Technical Cooperation, Egypt has supported TCDC exchanges with African countries and with the Commonwealth of Independent States in areas such as agriculture, textiles, food processing, small-scale technology, education and health. Egypt also provided TCDC support to a number of Arab countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States aimed at helping

establish the necessary institutional mechanisms for mitigating the adverse social effects of structural adjustment programmes.

33. Tunisia has also become a country active in TCDC. In cooperation with the Special Unit for TCDC, the Government of Tunisia co-sponsored a capacities needs matching exercise in respect of 13 French-speaking African countries in the area of sustainable development which culminated in over 130 bilateral agreements between Tunisia and the participating countries. As a partner in the exercise, the Islamic Development Bank indicated its preparedness to finance all the agreements that met its criteria, based on a preliminary screening. During the reporting period, Tunisia focused on providing training to technicians from other developing countries, for example, training in telecommunications for Djibouti and Yemen; in vocational training and employment for Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal; in financial management and administration for 30 Mauritanian jurists.

34. TCDC activities in Somalia appeared to be largely funded by UNDP and the United Nations Volunteers programme. The focus was on training, study tours and volunteer services. Two examples worth citing are the training of Somalis in civil aviation, using 30 volunteers from Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Egypt and the Philippines; and study tours on ports and trade efficiency to India and Mauritius.

35. TCDC activities between Morocco and a number of African countries focused on agricultural research, leather goods and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

36. Through the UNDP-sponsored programme, Learning from Best Practices, the United Arab Emirates hosted the International Conference on Best Practices for Improving the Living Environment, which was attended by 915 governmental policy makers and urban planners from 92 developing countries. Under another UNDP-sponsored TCDC initiative, the training of Dubai municipal officials in town planning, surveying, environmental protection and public health was made possible through study tours to different developing countries.

37. During the reporting period, another initiative based on networks, the 1998 Leadership Programme, was jointly sponsored by the Government of Jordan, United Nations University and the TCDC Special Unit. It brought together participants from several developing countries worldwide. Additionally, certain specialized TCDC institutions located in the Middle East played a role in stimulating exchanges among affiliated institutes.

Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

38. In the context of South/South cooperation, senior governmental officials from CIS countries participated in a three-week workshop in Santiago, Chile, on the establishment and management of pension funds using the Chilean model. The workshop addressed issues relating specifically to saving schemes, capital formation mechanisms and the operational aspects of the Chilean Pension Fund management schemes. Similar exchanges have taken place between Latin America and CIS countries, within the framework of TCDC, focusing on management capacity-building in a changing environment. Workshops were held in Buenos

Aires in May 1995 and in St. Petersburg in June 1995 and March 1998. A Conference on Governance, which included participants from CIS, Latin America and Africa, was held in Bucharest, Romania, in August 1997. In the same vein, a Forum of Parliamentarians and Businessmen, focusing, inter alia, on debt issues, will be held in St. Petersburg in June 1999. As countries in the region seek to intensify cooperation among themselves and also to benefit from the experience of countries in other regions grappling with common problems, the countries indicated in their responses to the questionnaire that such exchanges were likely to continue in the future.

B. Developed countries

39. In addition to the core of bilateral activities carried out by developing countries themselves, a clear role is emerging for developed countries in the process of technical cooperation among developing countries. Developed countries are able to make a substantial contribution to the TCDC modality through the allocation of funds earmarked for South/South projects. By stopping short of direct project involvement or the provision of technical assistance - hence avoiding the creation of a traditional North/South cooperation agreement - some developed countries are able to provide financial assistance to the TCDC modality on a third-party, or "triangular", basis.

40. In general, developed countries indicate they are positively disposed to the TCDC modality. Although the practice is not yet widespread, a number of developed countries have provided resources under triangular funding arrangements to support activities falling within the TCDC framework.

41. For the current report, only four developed countries provided direct responses to the questionnaire circulated by the Special Unit. Based on past experience, many developed countries indicated they do not have formal policies on TCDC, although they consider their technical cooperation activities compatible with the TCDC modality. Similarly, while most developed countries do not have formal TCDC focal point arrangements, they consider South/South cooperation an extension of their regular arrangements for managing technical cooperation activities overall.

42. During the reporting period, Germany provided a detailed account of its views concerning the TCDC, which it considers as an important complement to North/South cooperation. As an illustration of its commitment, Germany supported a programme of development cooperation between Chile and Uruguay in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises. Similarly, it provided funding support to the Asia/Pacific Regional Credit Association (APRACA), the Africa Regional Credit Association, which is designed to provide improved financial services to the poor, and to the Tropical Agricultural Research and Training Center (CATIE), a regional institution geared to research and education in forestry management in Costa Rica, and to the Latin American Energy Development Organization which has a good track record in promoting TCDC.

43. Finland supported a number of triangular funding arrangements during the reporting period, including a water supply programme in Viet Nam, with on-site training provided in China, and a project to strengthen the technical capacity

of the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Trade, under which study tours and training programmes were provided in Singapore. Finland is also currently seeking to develop two new triangular funding projects. The first, involving Mexico and Guatemala, is designed to improve the living conditions of communities in north-western Guatemala. The second, involving Chile and Nicaragua, is geared to the development of local wood-working industries in Nicaragua.

44. Austria identified two South/South initiatives which it had supported during the previous two years, aimed at supporting the promotion of TCDC - most notably a rural development in the Sahel carried out in collaboration with the Institute for Agrarian Development in Rabat, Morocco.

45. Overall, triangular funding arrangements for TCDC - which have been endorsed by the High-level Committee on TCDC - are gaining increased popularity in the implementation of TCDC projects. In fact, other developed countries, notably France, Japan and Norway, have also provided resources under triangular arrangements to further facilitate the implementation of TCDC initiatives. In this process, the developed countries have indicated they are mindful that triangular funding should not be allowed to compromise the integrity of TCDC initiatives, which must continue to be managed and implemented by the developing countries themselves and should be based on the use of expertise from those countries. Unless this principle is respected, such funding would become indistinguishable from traditional North/South cooperation.

46. Separate from the modality of triangular funding, the greatest commitment to South/South cooperation activities continued to come from the Government of Japan. Through direct annual contributions to the UNDP's South/South Cooperation Fund, the Japanese Human Resources Development Fund began in 1996 to work directly with the TCDC Special Unit to provide funding for ongoing TCDC projects organized and supervised by the Unit. During the first three years of this collaborative effort, Japan provided funds totalling $8 million, with a further $5 million earmarked for 1999. Under a similar arrangement, UNDP also established a separate funding vehicle for additional contributions from donor countries, known as the South/South Cooperation Trust Fund. During the reporting period, initial contributions were made by the Governments of the Republic of Korea and Ireland for projects expected to begin during the current year.

III. SUPPORT BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

47. Beyond the level of national and bilateral activities, a valuable agent for catalytic promotion of TCDC and ECDC has traditionally been found among intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other institutions located in the developing world. During the reporting period, the Special Unit maintained cooperative relations with several dozen international organizations and received detailed information from nearly 20 for the purposes of this report. Case studies have been drawn from the activities of three such organizations. They are the Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD); the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resource Management

(ICLARM); and the International Centre for Small Hydropower Development (IN-SHP), based in Hangzhou, China.

48. During the 1997-1999 reporting period, ACSAD, which specializes in water resources management, biodiversity, environment, desertification monitoring and control and rehabilitation of degraded lands, sponsored 32 individual TCDC exchanges. They addressed a wide range of technical issues, including the use of saline water in agriculture, improved techniques for the development of water resources, the breeding and development of wheat and barley varieties which can be disease-resistant and tolerant of drought conditions, improvements in small ruminant production and the conservation of biodiversity and the environment in the Arab region. ASCAD also supported three important networks - namely, the Date Palm Research and Development Network, the Camel Research and Development Network, and the Feed Research and Development Network - all of which promoted the application of TCDC exchanges in their areas of expertise. Since it was established, ACSAD has utilized more than 1,100 experts from developing countries in carrying out its activities and has trained more than 600 nationals from developing countries in institutions in other developing countries.

49. Similarly, ICLARM, whose operating mission is geared to research and capacity-building in natural resources management, fisheries stock assessment and aquaculture, assisted in a South/South training initiative among a number of scientists from the developing world in quantitative genetics and its application to select breeding. Other TCDC activities carried out by the Centre included the genetic improvement of carp and tilapia in Asia and the documentation and characterization of genetic resources for aquaculture enhancement in Africa. ICLARM also serves as a facilitator for the International Network for Genetics in Aquaculture (INGA), a network for technical exchanges between 11 Asian and African countries. During the reporting period, ICLARM independently trained 33 scientists from developing countries in various areas of specialization and another 187 in collaboration with its member countries.

50. The International Centre for Hydropower Development (IN-SHP) in China also played an active role in promoting TCDC with regard to the operation and management of small hydropower systems and the exchange of experiences among participating countries. Since its establishment in 1995, the Hydropower Centre has utilized the services of 62 experts from developing countries and trained over 900 persons.

51. The experience of these three institutions underlines the fact that beyond the level of national Governments, institutions of a technical nature have succeeded in developing a system of networking and patterns of exchange of experience that have made a major contribution to the expansion of TCDC activities in the developing countries.

IV. SUPPORT BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

A. United Nations organizations and agencies

52. It is widely agreed by all parties that in an "ideal world", TCDC activities would be activated, funded and carried out among developing countries themselves. In reality, it is equally acknowledged that considerable responsibility for the technical cooperation process must be borne by the international community, comprising donor countries and international institutions. Accordingly, repeated decisions and resolutions of the High-level Committee, Economic and Social Council and General Assembly have called upon the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, including the regional economic commissions, to support the efforts of the developing countries and generally to contribute to the advancement of the objectives of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Indeed, the United Nations system, through its various operating arms and agencies, has consistently served as the single most vigorous promoter, funder and facilitator of TCDC activities on a worldwide basis.

53. By now, most United Nations organizations and agencies, including the regional economic commissions, have formalized clear internal policies and procedures promoting TCDC in their global activities. Similarly, most of the organizations have put in place strong internal focal points to coordinate. While not yet universally applied, the United Nations system provides a good example of widespread organizational support to the process of technical cooperation among developing countries.

54. In all, 23 organizations and agencies within the United Nations system provided data to the Special Unit concerning their commitment and activities in support of TCDC. By way of representative examples, this report summarizes the activities of seven leading agencies in order to demonstrate technical cooperation activities during the reporting period. Based on information provided, these organizations have clear policies concerning the application of TCDC in their respective areas of competence and have been relatively active in promoting the TCDC modality during the reporting period.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

55. Over the years, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has consistently pursued a strategy incorporating the goals of TCDC, which are now fully integrated into its overall policy. FAO has also put in place the necessary institutional arrangements - primarily an effective focal point mechanism - to support the TCDC modality in its activities.

56. During the past two years, FAO has supported a broad range of TCDC activities. Areas of specific intervention include: animal production and health, land and water development, plant production and protection, marketing and credit, nutrition, food quality control, fisheries development, forestry, sustainable agriculture and rural development research extension and training, and the integration of norms in overall development. Some specific examples of TCDC initiatives through FAO facilitation and funding: Vietnamese experts provided training to Senegalese farmers, and Chinese technicians shared their experiences in the agricultural sector with Ethiopian counterparts. Similarly,

Bangladesh experts assisted Zambia in the development of small-scale irrigation technology, while Brazilian experts provided advice to Namibians in fruit culture. In addition, technical cooperation experts from India provided TCDC assistance to Uganda and Sierra Leone, and Senegalese experts provided advice to Burundi and Rwanda.

57. FAO has played an important role in sponsoring various networking arrangements among institutions operating in the agricultural sector. For example, in Africa it supported the establishment of the TCDC Fish Technology Networks. In Asia, networks have been established on vegetable research and development, oil seed production, post-harvest technology and agricultural cooperation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, networks on watershed management, post-harvest technology, agricultural policy and small ruminant development were also successfully launched.

58. In an important development, FAO explicitly recognized the importance of information management in support of an effective TCDC programme. FAO has been active in developing a database on expertise and institutional capacities in the agricultural sector, covering over 4,500 experts from more than 100 developing countries. In addition, FAO has developed an Information System on Agricultural Science and Technology (AGRIS), containing significant bibliographic material on agriculture, and a Current Research Information System (CARIS); together, the two systems contain over 2.7 million references. In a similar vein, FAO is collaborating with the Special Unit in documenting innovative and successful TCDC experiences in the agricultural sector which could be replicated in other developing countries and which, when completed, will form part of the TCDC information referral system (INRES) database.

World Health Organization (WHO)

59. The World Health Organization (WHO) has been involved during the past two years in promoting a number of TCDC initiatives. Specifically, it has provided extensive training of health personnel, on a TCDC basis, in areas such as epidemiology and health service management and in education and research in the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. WHO promoted cooperation between Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico and Paraguay in respect of an outbreak of hantavirus in the region and also promoted a joint programme with Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay on rabies control and cooperation between Cuba and Nicaragua in the control of leptospirosis. Another successful example of WHO's involvement in the promotion of South/South technical exchanges in the health sector is reflected in the establishment of the Asia/Pacific Health Network. Additionally, the South-East Asia regional office of WHO provided specific assistance geared to the needs of less developed countries in the region, including Bhutan, Nepal and Myanmar.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

60. South/South technical cooperation has always featured prominently in the activities carried out by UNFPA, especially since the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994. A special effort has been made to expand the application of TCDC approaches in the area of population control and management.

61. Two important initiatives could be given special mention. The Partners in Development Programme, based in Bangladesh, is a subregional organization designed to expand cooperation among its 13 member countries in the field of family planning. Similarly, the UNFPA centres of excellence established in Indonesia, Mexico and Thailand are designed to carry out training programmes in the field of population geared to the needs of participants, both in the public sector and in the community of non-governmental organizations.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

62. The current approach of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to South/South Cooperation in general - and the TCDC modality in particular - takes into account the changed circumstances of the global economic environment. UNCTAD's role is to formulate useful and effective trade and development strategies based on striking a judicious balance in the respective roles of government and the private sector in the economic process.

63. UNCTAD has continued to support priority areas relevant to the imperatives of the TCDC modality. These include subregional economic groupings, the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP), cooperation among financial institutions, trade and environment, competition law and policy, economic development and regional dynamics in Africa. UNCTAD's South/South technical cooperation strategy is geared, among other things, to strengthening the role of small and medium-sized enterprises to respond to the new global challenges. UNCTAD is also attempting to assist developing countries generally to strengthen their investment promotion agencies and hence facilitate much needed private direct investment. UNCTAD has also launched a Global Trade Point Network which has set up strategic "trade points" on a worldwide basis.

64. The purpose of these initiatives, taken together, is to assist developing countries to intensify their cooperation through an exchange of common experiences. The over-arching goal is to enable countries to develop their productive capacities and export competitiveness so that they can compete effectively in an increasingly liberalized global economic environment.

International Trade Centre (ITC)

65. Responding to globalization, the International Trade Centre (ITC) has sought to develop sharper tools to help developing countries exploit opportunities for expanded trade and also to strengthen their trade promotion infrastructure. At the regional level, emphasis is placed on the establishment of closer economic linkages among enterprises in the developing countries. At the interregional level, the focus is on developing product networks, which has become an increasingly important feature of ITC's TCDC cooperation activities.

66. In carrying out its activities, ITC has given close attention to the needs of the less developed countries. In 1998 it established a special office for the least developed countries and Africa. ITC also coordinates an integrated programme of trade-related TCDC assistance to the least developed countries, with the goal of strengthening interaction in that area between the relevant United Nations agencies (especially ITC, UNCTAD and UNDP) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

67. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was mandated by the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action in 1996 to incorporate TCDC and South/South cooperation into its activities as important operational modalities.

68. Against that background, Habitat pursued a number of successful initiatives within the framework of its Urban Management Programme, aimed at strengthening networks of grass-roots organizations and non-governmental organizations around the world. It also promoted exchanges between partner cities designed to share experiences in dealing with common problems. Additionally, its local leadership Management Training Programme facilitates the active transfer of experiences among countries in Africa, Asia and Eastern and Central Europe.

United Nations Industrial Organization (UNIDO)

69. In the age of globalization, the United Nations Industrial Organization (UNIDO) has paid increased attention to the complementary modalities of TCDC and ECDC as strategies for economic survival among developing countries. UNIDO has sought to strengthen its internal infrastructure for the promotion of technical exchanges in the industrial sector of developing countries, to identify suitable implementation mechanisms, to increase information flows and to promote networking among appropriate institutions.

70. Since 1997, UNIDO has sponsored some 50 projects with distinct elements of South/South technical exchanges and ECDC components. These range across various fields, including cement technology, sugar production, medicinal and aromatic plants, steel production, food processing, textile production, gold mining, environmental protection, metrology and standardization.

71. Among the more notable TCDC-type arrangements sponsored by UNIDO is the Regional Network on Safe Pesticide Production and Information for Asia and the Pacific (RENAPAP), involving 14 countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam). In addition, UNIDO sponsored a regional small and medium enterprise development programme for Africa. Also worthy of note are UNIDO's integrated programme for business partnership/investment opportunities in agro-food sectors; its regional African leather and footwear industry, involving Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia, Uganda and Zimbabwe; and the promotion of agro-related networking industries in Asia and the Pacific.

B. United Nations Development Programme and the Special Unit for TCDC

72. Among the various organs of the United Nations system, UNDP remains the most significant source of funding for TCDC activities. According to the report of the Secretary-General[5] on strengthening the integration of economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) and technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) in the United Nations system, submitted to the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities during the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, UNDP accounted for about 50 per cent of the system's average annual expenditure of approximately $100

million on TCDC activities by the organizations and agencies. More than half of that amount was reported as coming from regional allocations. In addition and in keeping with UNDP's leading role in TCDC, the Executive Board allocated 0.5 per cent of its overall programme resources for the period 1997-1999 to enable the organization, through the Special Unit for TCDC, to carry out the functions mandated by the General Assembly as the system-wide coordinator on TCDC matters.

73. Relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the High-level Committee, the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Board call for mainstreaming the modality of TCDC in all the operational activities for development. Accordingly, the Administrator of UNDP in 1997 issued a corporate strategy aimed at recognizing the use of TCDC as one of the core responsibilities of senior managers; according first consideration to the TCDC modality in every programme cycle; and mainstreaming the TCDC modality in all programmes and projects of UNDP. A review of the UNDP's regional and country programmes for the period 1997-1999 reveals that over 50 per cent have incorporated TCDC either as an implementation strategy or as specific activities. In addition, a number of countries, including China, Bhutan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, have institutionalized the process by establishing umbrella TCDC programmes, resulting in a sustained pattern of TCDC with other developing countries.

74. A review of the activities supported by the Special Unit during the reporting period further attests to the validity of the new directions strategy. The TCDC programme has undergone major reorientation towards supporting strategic initiatives that are likely to have a major impact on a larger number of developing countries, focusing primarily on five priority areas as follows: trade and investment; poverty alleviation; production and employment; macroeconomic policy coordination; and environmental management.

75. In implementing the new directions strategy, the Unit has directed its programme towards four broad categories of activity. These are:

(a) Strengthening the capacities of developing countries through increased sharing of best practices and intercountry knowledge-networking to mount effective interventions in the priority areas listed above;

(b) Deepening South/South policy dialogue and intellectual exchanges on critical issues of development and globalization;

(c) Enhancing South/South channels of communication through expansion and decentralization of the TCDC information referral system (TCDC-INRES);

(d) Mobilizing global and broad-based support for technical and economic cooperation among developing countries (TCDC/ECDC). The following paragraphs provide highlights of interventions in each of these categories.

76. To help strengthen the capacities of developing countries in sustainable human development through TCDC, the Unit supported a number of strategic initiatives aimed at increasing the sharing of experiences in critical areas and strengthening networking among centres of excellence. One example is the

Network of Technology Management Centres for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, which brought together universities, research and development communities, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations and the productive sector to develop innovative approaches to increasing productivity, diversifying employment and international competitiveness. The Regional Prevention of Maternal Mortality Network, headquartered in Ghana, has successfully helped to reduce maternal death in 11 rural communities in West Africa. The collaboration with the West Africa Rice Development Association, under a triangular arrangement with Japan, has evolved into a partnership of centres of excellence in the crossbreeding of African and Asian rice as well as in matters of food security. The Ministerial Meeting of the Small Island Developing States in the Indian, Mediterranean and Atlantic Oceans, jointly sponsored by the Unit with the African Development Bank and held in the Seychelles in July 1998, led to the adoption of the Mahe Declaration and Program Action for the small island developing States. The Special Unit collaborated with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, in organizing a meeting of prospective donors and representatives of small island developing States, held in New York in February 1999 which, inter alia, renewed the spirit of partnership between small island developing States and donors in the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action. Also noteworthy was another triangular initiative in support of Cuba's economic recovery, under which expertise was transferred from Brazil, Chile and Mexico, with triangular support provided by Norway, in macroeconomic policy formulation, national budgeting, central banking accounting, treasury functions, commercial banking and external debt management.

77. The second set of strategic initiatives supported by the Special Unit aimed at enhancing South/South policy dialogue and intellectual exchanges. For example, in partnership with UNCTAD and the Group of 77 and China, representatives from Governments and the private sector as well as 140 young entrepreneurs were brought together at the South/South Conference on Trade, Investment and Finance, held in Costa Rica in January 1997, to discuss and map out strategies. Other UNDP-supported activities included the G-77 High-level Advisory Meeting on the South Summit (Jakarta, June 1998), the South/South Conference on Regional and Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (Bali, December 1998) and the G-77 brainstorming session in preparation for the Conference of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (New York, September 1998). In collaboration with the South Centre and the Third World Network and with its own publication, Cooperation South, the Unit was able to provide developing countries with some much needed analysis and policy options for accelerating national socio-economic progress and integration into the global economy.

78. The third set of strategic initiatives supported by the Special Unit has been to expand the channels of communication among developing countries. During the reporting period, special efforts were made to assist developing countries in optimizing the use of information technology as an effective and efficient means of exchanging experiences and good practices in development. In partnership with the International Development Research Centre in Canada, the Economic Commission for Africa, and UNDP's own Sustainable Development Network Programme, the Unit is supporting the creation of state-of-the-art and content-based national TCDC Web sites. Each national website will interact with those in other countries and will be linked to the TCDC INRES-WIDE (Web of

Information for Development). The initial stage involves over 30 countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Central America. Another noteworthy initiative involves the compilation and inclusion in the INRES-WIDE system of innovative and successful experiences in the field of science and technology, agriculture, food security, socio-economic development and environmental management, and in the priority areas of small island developing States.

79. During the reporting period, the Special Unit made significant progress in mobilizing global and broad-based support for TCDC. In response to decision 10/2 of the High-level Committee and to General Assembly resolution 52/205 of 18 December 1997, and through extensive consultation with all the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and member States, the Unit prepared revised guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning TCDC and the Secretary-General's report on strengthening the integration of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries in the operational activities of the United Nations system. The endorsement of these strategic documents by the General Assembly provides the necessary common ground for all the organizations and agencies to pursue TCDC and ECDC in a more systematic, coordinated and effective manner. What was most encouraging was the overwhelming support for TCDC expressed by member States at the twentieth anniversary commemoration of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, organized in October 1998.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

80. Based on the foregoing assessment of the progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action by all parties concerned during the reporting period, the following conclusions and recommendations are made for consideration by the High-level Committee at its eleventh session.

81. First, profound historical changes are occurring in the global environment on the eve of the new millennium, and major challenges continue to be imposed by the juggernaut of globalization and economic liberalization. In the quest for a more truly interdependent and humane global order, TCDC and South/South cooperation can serve as important instruments for channelling the energies and capacities of the developing countries to respond to the development challenges which they face. In this quest, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action will continue to serve as an important beacon for guiding action towards the achievement of this goal.

82. Secondly, as evidenced in the report above, TCDC - both as a modality and as an integral component of contemporary international development cooperation - is increasingly recognized and appreciated by the international community, as offering viable opportunities for improving socio-economic development of developing countries and for enabling their participation and integration in the global economy. This trend is further supported by the fact that developing countries all possess, to a varying degree, capacities in various development fields - notably trade and investment, technology, employment and production, macroeconomic management, protection and regeneration of the environment, and poverty alleviation. More focused and deliberate efforts should be made, both by developing countries and the international development community, towards

identifying and making available these capacities to benefit large numbers of developing countries.

83. Thirdly, as awareness continues to grow of the usefulness of TCDC, more and more developing countries are taking a lead role in initiating, organizing and financing TCDC initiatives in strategic areas of development for the benefit of large numbers of developing countries in other regions. Developing countries that are themselves pro-active in supporting TCDC include Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela and Uganda. The analysis seems to support the conclusion that TCDC has been more successful in those countries where government has put in place explicit TCDC policy linked with national development planning process; established a strong TCDC focal point with the necessary supporting structure; and earmarked national budgetary allocations or devised means for innovative use of external assistance, including triangular cooperation. TCDC has been less successful in countries where these conditions are either weak or non-existent or where external support remains a primary source for initiating such activities. This poses a challenge for developing countries to make a deliberate effort and share with one another their experiences in these areas.

84. Fourthly, since adequate financing is critical in promoting and expanding TCDC, all the organizations and agencies and the executive boards of the funds and programmes should consider increasing the allocation of resources for TCDC, as called for by General Assembly resolution 53/192 of 15 December 1998. Triangular cooperation is a relatively new concept and its advantages as a useful, productive, cost-effective and mutually beneficial development tool are only beginning to be fully recognized and appreciated. It is, however, encouraging to note that during the reporting period, a growing number of donor countries, such as Austria, Finland, France, Ireland, Japan, Germany and Norway, have shown interest and been involved in TCDC activities through triangular cooperation. In the face of shrinking official development assistance, and as the search continues for effective and innovative ways of allocating such resources, triangular support for TCDC will undoubtedly grow.

85. Fifthly, the analysis of the TCDC activities reported by the United Nations organizations and agencies seems to support the conclusion that all the United Nations organizations and agencies, including the regional commissions, have made concerted efforts to formalize their internal policies and procedures on TCDC and have established the necessary supporting structure with designated TCDC focal points. Their programmes are increasingly oriented towards supporting South/South cooperation. The analysis also points to the conclusion that stronger ownership by developing countries and the sustainability of TCDC/ECDC arrangements can be more effectively achieved through supporting networking of knowledge-based centres of excellence in the South and systematic sharing of information and best practices; South/South policy dialogue and intellectual exchanges on critical issues of development and globalization, within the areas of competence of the respective organizations and agencies; and initiatives aimed at improving South/South channels of communication and access to information technology.

86. Finally, the endorsement by the General Assembly of the Revised System-wide Guidelines on the Review of Policies and Procedures for TCDC and the recommendations of the Secretary-General (A/53/226/Add.4) on strengthening TCDC and ECDC in operational activities for development have established a clear baseline for better coordinated and focused support to TCDC activities on a system-wide and global basis. It is, therefore, important and urgent for the Special Unit for TCDC, in close consultation with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, to develop common indicators for measuring progress and results on a more systematic basis. Efforts should also be made to operationalize the system-wide guidelines on TCDC and the recommendations of the Secretary-General at the country level through the United Nations Resident Coordinator system.

Notes

[1] See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 39 (A/52/39), annex I.

[2] Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

[3] This report should be read in conjunction with the report on the progress made in the implementation of the new directions strategy (TCDC/11/2).

[4] General Assembly resolution 50/119 of 20 December 1995.

[5] A/53/226/Add.4.

Annex

THE COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America	Arab States	Europe and CIS	United Nations organizations	Intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations
Mauritius	Malaysia	Costa Rica	Iraq	Romania	UNCTAD	
Togo	Cambodia	Paraguay	Algeria	Germany	Habitat	Organization of American States
Senegal	Indonesia	Peru	Kuwait	Estonia	ITC (ILO)	International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management
Uganda	Bhutan	Nicaragua	Jordan	Ukraine	UNIDO	International Centre for Small Hydropower Development
Kenya	Thailand	El Salvador		Bulgaria	WHO	Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands
Burundi	China	Panama		Malta	ESCAP	Arab Gulf Programme/UNDP
Guinea	Sri Lanka	Uruguay		Bosnia	UPU	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
Zaire	Pakistan	Honduras		Belarus	IMF	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
Mozambique	Bangladesh	Jamaica		Finland		Inter-American Development Bank

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Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America	Arab States	Europe and CIS	United Nations organizations	Intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations
Madagascar	Philippines	Barbados		Lithuania	FAO	Central American Committee for Inter-Agency Cooperation
Angola	Afghanistan	Haiti		Italy	Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries	Inter-American Development Bank
Sao Tome and Principe		Mexico		Turkey	IFAD	Pan American Health Organization
Nigeria		Argentina			CEPAL/ECLAC	Secretaría Permanente del Tratado General de Integratión Económica Centroamericana
Côte d'Ivoire		Venezuela			UNFPA	Central American Bank for Economic Integration/BCIEA
United Republic of Tanzania					ICAO	African Regional Centre for Technology
Gabon					ECE	Regional Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network
Cameroon					ECA	Asociación Latinoamericana de Instituciones Financieras de Desarrollo

Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America	Arab States	Europe and CIS	United Nations organizations	Intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations
Liberia					UNU	
Comoros					UNESCO	
Burkina Faso					WFP	
Benin					ESCAP/IMO	

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REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW DIRECTIONS STRATEGY FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

SUMMARY

The present report is submitted in accordance with decision 10/1 B, adopted by the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries at its tenth session. It provides an analysis of the progress made in the implementation of the new directions strategy for technical cooperation among developing countries during the period 1997-1998.

* TCDC/11/L.1.

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CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1	3
II.	THE NEW DIRECTIONS STRATEGY	2 - 6	3
III.	THE IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE	7 - 25	4
	A. Strategic orientation of TCDC	8 - 11	5
	B. National TCDC management capacity	12 - 14	6
	C. The "pivotal country" concept and its practice	15 - 16	6
	D. Triangular cooperation	17 - 18	7
	E. Building partnerships for TCDC	19 - 21	7
	F. Integration of the TCDC and ECDC modalities	22 - 23	8
	G. Sharing of information and experiences	24 - 25	9
IV.	OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	26 - 29	9

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Responding to the challenges occurring in the global economic order, the General Assembly in December 1994 requested the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries to initiate the preparation of a report on new directions for technical cooperation among developing countries, which would re-examine the concept of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) and make recommendations to ensure that it continues to serve as a viable strategy in support of the development efforts of developing countries. The new directions report prepared by the Special Unit for TCDC (TCDC/9/3) and the main recommendations contained therein were endorsed by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board), by the Economic and Social Council, and by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/119 of 20 December 1995.

II. THE NEW DIRECTIONS STRATEGY

2. The strategy contained in the new directions report presented 20 specific recommendations. Central to the overall strategy is the need for adoption of a more strategic policy and substantive re-orientation for TCDC, focusing on a number of high-priority areas - notably, trade and investment, debt, poverty alleviation, production and employment, the environment, macroeconomic policy coordination and aid management - that are likely to have major development impact on a large number of developing countries.

3. In addition, the report called for sharpening the strategic thrust of a number of other activities carried out by all partners in international development cooperation, especially by the Special Unit for TCDC and other United Nations organizations and agencies. Among these, it drew attention to the need for establishing closer operational linkages between technical and economic cooperation among developing countries (TCDC/ECDC) so as to ensure that these two modalities be pursued in a mutually complementary manner to serve wider economic cooperation schemes among developing countries. The report also emphasized the desirability of identifying "pivotal countries" to serve as catalysts for the promotion of TCDC, both within regions and interregionally, along with the need to promote triangular cooperation arrangements. Other issues raised in the report included the formulation of national TCDC policies, the strengthening of national TCDC focal points, the establishment of partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and the identification of innovative funding arrangements for TCDC activities. Finally, the strategy called for the expansion of the TCDC information referral system (TCDC-INRES) into a multidimensional information gateway to carry information not only on institutional capacities in developing countries but also on individual experts, centres of excellence and successful innovative experiences that could be replicated in other developing countries.

4. Since the adoption of the new directions strategy by the General Assembly in 1995, the international environment for development cooperation has undergone further changes, especially the acceleration of globalization and the continued

decline in development financing, including official development assistance. South/South cooperation, including TCDC and ECDC, offers viable opportunities for developing countries in their individual and collective pursuit of sustained economic growth and equitable development and for ensuring their more effective participation in the newly emerging global economic system. This and the significant progress made in the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action during the reporting period,[1] by the developing countries, the developed countries, the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attest to the continued validity of the new directions for TCDC.

5. To further strengthen this global partnership for TCDC, the High-level Committee, in its decision 10/1 B, urged all the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, inter alia, to address effectively and to operationalize the recommendations contained in the new directions strategy. In particular, this included: identification of "pivotal countries" for TCDC; promotion of triangular cooperation arrangements; identification and dissemination of best practices in TCDC; expansion of TCDC-INRES; establishment of closer linkages on policy and operational aspects between TCDC and ECDC; and innovative funding arrangements for TCDC. In the same decision, the Administrator of UNDP was requested to present a report to the High-level Committee at its twelfth session in 1999 on progress made in implementing the decision.

6. In preparing the present report, the Special Unit for TCDC has drawn to a large extent on information contained in the questionnaires it sent to developing and developed country member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations and agencies and bureaux within the United Nations system - the same sources used for preparing the report on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (TCDC/11/1). Since that document provides comprehensive coverage of national, global and United Nations system support for TCDC during the review period and since the review of progress in respect of the new directions strategy derives from that context, the present report sets out general trends and progress in the overall implementation of the strategy and assesses their potential.

III. THE IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE

7. Given the need to address the general thrust of the new directions strategy, as well as the more specific issues highlighted in decision 10/1 B of the High-level Committee, the analysis presented in this report is based on the 20 recommendations set out in the new directions report of 1995 (TCDC/9/3), here clustered under seven broad headings:

(a) Strategic reorientation of TCDC activities to support initiatives that are likely to have a major impact on a large number of developing countries;

(b) Support for national policy and the development of capacities for spontaneous TCDC activities;

(c) Advancement of the "pivotal country" approach;

(d) Promotion of triangular cooperation arrangements;

(e) Building new partnerships for TCDC;

(f) Strengthening the integration of the TCDC and ECDC modalities and system coordination;

(g) Promotion of experience-sharing and information-sharing among developing countries.

A. Strategic orientation of TCDC

8. Among its major goals, the new directions strategy attempts to encourage the TCDC actors to move towards sustained, broad-based actions, preferably involving groups of countries that share similar needs, instead of separate ad hoc activities that target single countries.

9. In general, the new directions guidelines were intended to serve as a set of parameters primarily for the United Nations system so as to achieve maximum impact with scarce resources. The areas of intervention suggested here apply less to TCDC activities of a direct bilateral nature, since countries that make such agreements are free to determine activities between themselves. Similarly, IGO and NGO interventions to promote TCDC are typically based on each organization's field of competence, rather than being subject to the criteria of any external agent. However, because the stated goal of TCDC activities is multiple rather than single beneficiaries, this applies widely to activities initiated by bodies of the United Nations system.

10. Evidence gathered for the reporting period shows that considerable overall progress was made in response to this strategic reorientation. In the case of national and bilateral TCDC, more developing countries reported on activities involving multiple participants, including workshops, training programmes and other skills-sharing exchanges. Good examples include active bilateral programmes sponsored, among others, by China, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Pakistan, Peru and Senegal.[1] Moreover, a review of the bilateral projects undertaken reveals that most - though not all - fell within the priority areas suggested in the new directions strategy. As growing numbers of developing countries attain higher levels of technical skills and increased resources, they seem to have expanded their outreach efforts to embrace a larger number of development partners as a matter of policy. In the case of United Nations bodies during the reporting period, the data indicate a shift in the focus of TCDC activities towards the new directions strategy.

11. The activities of the Special Unit for TCDC during the reporting period appear wholly in line with the new directions strategy. Its priority areas determined the Special Unit's intercountry and interregional interventions as well as its support of networks. The activities of the Unit were also chosen for potential impact on a large number of countries, as exemplified by the Conference on Trade Investment and Finance, held at San José, Costa Rica, in 1997; the launching of the Microfin Africa Network for poverty alleviation; the joint Malaysian initiative to train bankers from 10 countries in Africa; support

of the West African Rice Development Association (WARDA) rice-breeding initiative; and extensive assistance to the South Centre and the Group of 77 and China.

B. National TCDC management capacity

12. The new directions strategy recognized governance issues as fundamental to the success or failure of the TCDC modality. National and bilateral TCDC activities during the reporting period clearly indicate that an increasing number of developing countries are emerging as key proponents of the TCDC process, assuming leadership roles in promoting, organizing and funding bilateral and regional TCDC-related projects as part of their annual commitment to trade, investment and international cooperation activities. By playing leadership roles, these countries have further validated the process of TCDC and given the modality wider application, both geographically and substantively.

13. Nevertheless, while the TCDC modality has shown encouraging levels of growth in acceptance and application among beneficiary countries overall, some countries have yet to become active participants in the TCDC process. A number of these have lacked either an effective national focal point or explicit national policies for implementing TCDC programmes. This suggests that these two institutional developments are basic preconditions for meaningful TCDC-related activity.

14. In its continuing efforts to help developing countries improve this situation, the Special Unit organized the National TCDC Focal Points Meeting for the Asia and Pacific Region in 1997 in Singapore to exchange experiences in such areas as national TCDC policies, national TCDC focal point arrangements, and successful and innovative TCDC practices. The meeting was attended by not only national TCDC focal points from almost all the countries of the region but also representatives from Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. Another important 1997 activity of the Unit that spurred similar exchanges was the meeting of Directors-General of Technical Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean. Both events contributed directly and indirectly to the overall management and coordination of TCDC activities by the participating developing countries.

C. The "pivotal country" concept and its practice

15. To help put the concept and practice of "pivotal countries" into operation, the Special Unit for TCDC organized a meeting in Santiago, Chile, in November 1997. Attended by 23 developing countries from Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, the meeting concluded that a growing number of developing countries, by virtue of their capacities and experience, were positioned to play a "lead role" in the promotion and application of TCDC by sharing such capacities and experiences with other developing countries. The meeting also broadly defined "pivotal countries" as those having a rich history of and systematic participation in TCDC activities as providers of know-how to other developing countries; the existence of indigenous capacities and capabilities and a willingness to share

them with other developing countries; an explicit national TCDC policy, well-established national focal point arrangements, and a commitment to utilizing the TCDC modality in the country's development programmes; the existence of national technical cooperation agencies specifically responsible for TCDC, supported by the necessary budgetary resources; and a database on national capacities and experiences. While further efforts to refine these criteria are needed, the Committee may consider them as the basis for identifying pivotal countries for TCDC.

16. The review of national and bilateral TCDC activities[1] reveals that more and more developing countries - notably Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela and Uganda - are already taking a lead role in initiating and sponsoring TCDC activities to benefit large numbers of developing countries. As the number increases, the level of TCDC appears likely to grow, along with support for it, both in terms of its scope and in substance.

D. Triangular cooperation

17. Triangular cooperation, a relatively new phenomenon,[1] shows significant promise for enriching the content and dynamics of South/South cooperation by enabling the developed countries, along with non-traditional development cooperation partners, notably non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to participate in the TCDC process. In addition to Japan - which remains the largest contributor to triangular cooperation, given its voluntary donation to the Fund for South/South Cooperation under the Japanese Human Resources Development Fund - the growing number of other donor countries - among them, Austria, Finland, France, Ireland, Germany and Norway - suggests an increasing realization of the value that this arrangement can bring to traditional technical cooperation.

18. The challenge facing the developing countries, the developed countries and, indeed, the multilateral organizations, especially the Special Unit for TCDC, is to demonstrate the complementarity of triangulation to traditional technical cooperation; systematically document and share with one another and with all other interested countries the experience of successful TCDC triangular arrangements; develop a methodology for documenting such successful experiences; and identify and develop specific "project packages" in high-impact development cooperation areas that can attract triangular funding from donor countries.

E. Building partnerships for TCDC

19. Another major thrust of the new directions strategy is building broad-based partnerships to foster South/South cooperation in general and the TCDC modality in particular, because such partnerships appear to enhance the sustainability and the substance of development efforts. There is ample evidence of concerted undertakings of multiple actors: United Nations organizations and other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and centres of excellence in both developing and developed countries.[1]

20. A number of partnership initiatives among these diverse actors suggests that developing countries can be better served by the adoption of a "theme" approach that specifies the roles and responsibilities of the different partners under common objectives. A case in point is the partnership programme on trade and globalization, involving the South Centre, the Third World Network (TWN) and the Special Unit. In this partnership, the South Centre provides detailed analysis of issues pertaining to the World Trade Organization (WTO) process, which has led to the publication of a monograph on the WTO multilateral trade agenda and the South. The TWN conducts orientations and briefings to the Geneva-based southern negotiators on WTO-related subject-specific issues on a continuing basis. For its part, the Special Unit provides thorough analysis of the multifaceted aspects of globalization through its semi-annual journal Cooperation South. This theme-oriented division of labour gives developing countries the kinds of information they need for a coherent and better coordinated approach to policy-making on issues vital to their active participation in economic globalization.

21. Another promising trend in partnership-building is optimal use of comparative strength among the different partners. One case in point here is a joint initiative to document "best practices" sponsored by the Special Unit in which the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) will document best practices in agriculture and food security; the Malaysia-based TWN, in environment; the Third World Network of Scientific Organizations (TWNSO), in science and technology; and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada, in poverty eradication. At the time of this report, more than 100 of the targeted 250 best practices had been documented. They will be published in monograph forms and also incorporated into TCDC-INRES for worldwide dissemination and possible replication in interested developing countries. These successes notwithstanding, progress in forging partnerships with the private sector was less evident during the reporting period.

F. Integration of the TCDC and ECDC modalities

22. Strengthening the operational linkages between TCDC and ECDC in support of wider economic cooperation schemes among developing countries, both regionally and interregionally, is also a central aspect of the new directions strategy. During the reporting period, UNDP supported the Group of 77 in the High-level Conference on South/South Economic Cooperation among Economic Groupings, held in Bali in December 1998. The initiative brought together policy makers from the 133 member countries of the Group of 77 and a large number of regional economic groupings, as well as relevant United Nations bodies, including the regional commissions. The extensive policy and substantive exchanges that took place on such issues as regional and subregional trade arrangements, "growth triangles" and special economic and free-trade zones led to the adoption of the Bali Declaration and a Plan of Action on this urgent, complex subject. In reaching consensus at the Conference, the South took a significant step towards its goal of increased regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration.

23. In response to decision 10/2 of the High-level Committee, and to General Assembly resolution 52/205 of 18 December 1997, the Special Unit prepared the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the integration of economic and

technical cooperation among developing countries in the operational activities of the United Nations system. These recommendations offer a baseline for improved integration and coordination. Their full implementation poses an urgent challenge to all organizations and agencies, including the regional commissions, for a collective effort to develop common indicators of measuring progress and results in implementing the proposals of the Secretary-General.

G. Sharing of information and experiences

24. Another major thrust of the new directions strategy is the need to increase sharing of information and successful and innovative development experiences among developing countries so as to avoid duplication of effort. Many solutions to common problems have already been developed elsewhere in the South. An increasing number of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system have been pooling their resources and competencies to support South/South networks aimed at enhancing information flows and the sharing of development experiences.[1] Areas of network creation include the Asia Pacific Health Network of the World Health Organization (WHO); the Global Trade Point Network of the UNCTAD; the Regional Network on Safe Pesticide Production and Information for Asia and the Pacific of UNIDO; and the Sustainable Development Network of Small Island Developing States of UNDP.

25. Additionally, the creation of national TCDC websites, initially in 30 countries, and the link-up of these websites with an expanded TCDC-INRES contribute to enhancing the global gateway for developing countries to access and exchange information and best practices. Other noteworthy advances in this regard are a variety of sector-specific data systems in many of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system.

IV. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

26. In view of the accelerating shifts that have taken place during the past two decades in the global order and among countries and international institutions, both economic and political, the viability and attractiveness of South/South cooperation as an overall development mode appears more compelling today than ever before. Among the various configurations of South/South cooperation, the evidence gathered for this report provides incontestable proof that the specific modality of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) has not only remained in widespread use but has continued to grow in popularity and application among developing country partners. Moreover, the growth of TCDC can be measured not only through the number and range of TCDC-related projects completed or ongoing but also by the spread of new TCDC configurations, including a sharp increase in country-to-country bilateral TCDC projects, the recent phenomenon of donor country involvement in triangular funding schemes, and the proliferation of partnerships among intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other players within the multilateral system. Given the demonstrated acceleration in TCDC activities registered within the past four years, the fine-tuning of the TCDC modality through the new directions strategy, put in place four years ago, appears to

have had a positive impact on the usefulness and applicability of the TCDC methodology.

27. As the application of the TCDC modality continues to grow, the programmes themselves appear to have undergone a steady evolution from the single, country-by-country interventions of the early days of TCDC towards more broad-based applications on a multiple-country and sometimes regional basis. In the case of TCDC programmes initiated or coordinated by the Special Unit or by other bodies of the United Nations system, the involvement of multiple players in single TCDC interventions, which has now become common practice, would seem to indicate that the system is successfully adopting the mandate set out in the new directions strategy - i.e., that TCDC activities should be designed to have the maximum impact on a large number of developing countries. In the case of TCDC activities outside the system - i.e., projects that are initiated, funded and executed in a spontaneous manner between bilateral partners - a parallel increase in the number of participating or beneficiary countries appears to reflect directly the steady improvement of the technical capabilities and funding resources of a growing number of developing countries willing to share their experiences with others.

28. The data drawn from successive biennial reports to the High-level Committee on the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan indicate a steady increase in the number of developing country member States reporting that suitable domestic conditions exist for the management and operationalization of TCDC programmes. The evaluation of national responses to the questionnaires of the Special Unit has revealed during every reporting period that the effective operation of TCDC - indeed, of any form of development cooperation activity - depends on the development of three fundamental conditions by national Governments. These are:

(a) The designation of an effective domestic focal point mechanism within the appropriate governmental ministry or department to act as organizer and coordinator of TCDC programmes and opportunities;

(b) The elucidation of a clear national policy setting out the methods and approaches for providing - or receiving - technical assistance from other developing countries;

(c) A basic approach to funding TCDC activities, whether through specific budgetary allocations or, in the case of the more impoverished countries, through channels equipped to receive funding provided by bilateral partners or through the multilateral system. Information for the current reporting period points to two trends. On the one hand, there has been a steady upswing in the number of developing countries that have made these institutional changes. This growth mirrors and supports the system recommended by the new directions strategy of designating "pivotal countries", in recognition of superior performance and leadership potential as TCDC actors. On the other hand, in a number of developing countries, particularly the least developed, where improvements in governance institutions could lead to the elaboration of appropriate policy and support for enhanced use of the TCDC modality, the Special Unit, with the collaboration of the countries concerned, will continue to provide advice and support. It remains up to the individual countries to decide whether they wish, or are able, to absorb this assistance. Further

efforts to assist the least developed countries to establish the necessary systems of governance could also be made by other developing countries on a cooperative bilateral basis.

29. Among the most heartening trends to emerge during the current reporting period is the emergence of developed countries as third-party, or triangular, donors within the TCDC process. As the data indicate, no fewer than six donor countries - led by Japan - have emerged during the past two years to play a role in a variety of TCDC projects. By keeping an arms-length relationship with the projects - thus ensuring that they remain true examples of South/South technical cooperation - these donor countries have demonstrated a genuine commitment to TCDC as a viable, effective and efficient mode of intercountry transfers of skills and technology. The importance of this development cannot be overstated, since endorsement of the South/South cooperation mode by partners from northern countries could represent a significant breakthrough in funding and in increased stature and legitimacy for TCDC in the years to come.

Notes

[1] See TCDC/11/1.

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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

The present document is submitted in compliance with paragraph 11 of decision 10/1 B and paragraphs 3 and 6 of decision 10/2 of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries regarding:

(a) The implementation of the guidelines for the review of policies and procedures by the United Nations development system concerning technical cooperation among developing countries (decision 10/2, para.3);

(b) Organizational and supportive arrangements for technical cooperation among developing countries, such as administrative, legal, informational and financial arrangements (decision 10/1 B, para. 11 and decision 10/2, para. 6).

* TCDC/11/L.1.

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I. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM CONCERNING TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

1. In its decision 10/2, the High-level Committee requested the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to carry out consultations on the guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, taking into account the views expressed by Member States and the new directions strategy for technical cooperation among developing countries, and to submit the recommendations on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, for further consideration and approval, with a view that recommendations would be submitted to the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in the context of the triennial policy review of operations activities for development of the United Nations system. The aforementioned actions were taken and the revised guidelines[1] have been disseminated to the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, which have been encouraged to ensure their effective implementation. The account below summarizes the revisions and the status of implementation of the revised guidelines.

2. The revised guidelines are, for the most part, an affirmation of the earlier version which were approved by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and have been applied on an experimental basis since 1993. However, some modifications have been made in order to render them more consistent with the strategic orientation and focus of the new directions for technical cooperation among developing countries,[2] prepared at the request of the General Assembly in 1994, and to incorporate the views expressed by various organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. Other revisions have their source in policy-related directives issuing from recent decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the UNDP Executive Board.

3. Major changes in the international economic system in recent years - principally the movement towards a more liberalized trading regime resulting in the globalization of markets and production structures - have underlined the continued validity of TCDC as an instrument enabling developing countries to participate fully in the newly emerging economic order. Against this backdrop of an altered global economic and political environment, the revised guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning TCDC provide a strengthened framework for the expansion of South/South cooperation.

4. The overall goal of the revised guidelines is to mainstream the TCDC modality into the operational activities for development of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. The major elements in this modified framework require the organizations and agencies to undertake a number of measures whose collective effect would be to facilitate the use of TCDC as a matter of first consideration in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects they support or implement. There are several key elements to this objective. First, there should be a focus on

strategic initiatives - high priority issues - that are likely to have a major development impact on a large number of developing countries. Secondly, there must be a system-wide policy to promote closer operational integration between TCDC and economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) in order to ensure that TCDC serves as a strategic instrument in the service of wider schemes among developing countries. Thirdly, "pivotal" developing countries should serve as catalysts in the promotion of TCDC within particular regions as well as interregionally. Fourthly, programmes must establish links with non-governmental organizations and the private sector for the promotion of TCDC. Fifthly, all parties in the development effort should promote innovative funding modalities such as triangular cooperation arrangements in support of TCDC activities. Sixthly, an expanded effort to develop and disseminate TCDC information systems and data banks is crucial to the wider use of TCDC. Seventhly, to promote a greater awareness and understanding of the comparative advantages of TCDC, more intensified training activities should be undertaken. Finally, it is essential that the TCDC focal points of the organizations of the United Nations system be strengthened.

5. The overall response of organizations and agencies of the United Nations development system to the revised guidelines has been positive. There is general agreement in their reporting on TCDC activities undertaken during the biennium 1997-1998 that the revised guidelines provide an improved framework for enhancing the TCDC elements in their programmes and projects.

6. As reported by the agencies and organizations of the system, the operational integration between TCDC and ECDC has made significant strides in nearly all development areas, including food and agriculture, health, gender in development, education, trade, and investment and industrial research. Organizations of the system are assisting developing countries to articulate national policies on ECDC/TCDC and have received substantial contributions from a number of developing countries in support of ECDC/TCDC activities.

7. The revised guidelines appear to have created a widespread recognition that fuller utilization of TCDC depends to a great extent on enhanced awareness of its advantages and benefits, together with greater familiarity with the operational mechanisms and procedures involved. Organizations and agencies of the United Nations development system have been carrying out activities such as staff orientation and briefing sessions to enhance in-house capacity to promote and support TCDC as well as assisting developing countries' institutions to improve their own capacities in this regard. Agency publications on TCDC play an essential part in sensitizing staff and collaborating partners regarding ongoing TCDC activities, new trends and opportunities as well as disseminating lessons of outstanding experiences and successful case studies which can be replicated.

8. There is a general consensus within the United Nations Development Programme, as expressed by the respective regional bureaux, that the guidelines have stimulated the accelerated use of the TCDC modality. The designation of "pivotal countries" has been especially effective in spreading "best practices" among developing countries; private sector partnerships have also increased as a result of emphasis placed on closer operational integration between TCDC and ECDC.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL AND SUPPORTIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, SUCH AS ADMINISTRATIVE, LEGAL, INFORMATION AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

9. In paragraph 11 of its decision 10/1 B, the High-level Committee called upon the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to ensure that the separate identity of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries within UNDP was maintained and decided to review periodically the impact and functioning of the Special Unit in promoting, monitoring and coordinating technical cooperation among developing countries on a system-wide basis. In paragraph 6 of its decision 10/2, the High-level Committee requested the Administrator of UNDP, in relation to the mandated functions and increasing responsibilities of the Special Unit, to ensure that the Special Unit was adequately staffed to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively.

10. During the biennium 1997-1998, the Special Unit functioned with its budgeted staff complement of seven Professional and nine General Service posts. Working within the framework of the new directions strategy, the Special Unit adopted a more focused approach, emphasizing longer-term partnerships with such entities as the South Centre and the Third World Academy of Sciences. It has continued initiatives to strengthen the use of information technology as a means of fostering wider use of the TCDC modality and accelerating more effective delivery of United Nations system-supported TCDC/ECDC efforts. Of particular interest is the re-tooling of the TCDC information referral system (INRES), now designated as INRES-WIDE (Web of Information for Development), to facilitate greater access to experiences, skills and know-how available in developing countries.

11. In its decision 95/3, the Executive Board of UNDP allocated 0.5 per cent of UNDP core programme resources to the promotion of TCDC during the current programme period (1997-1999). The Special Unit also had approximately US$ 1.3 million carried over from the previous programming cycle (1992-1996). However, due to the overall resource situation within UNDP, it was subsequently decided that the above-noted allocations should cover the period 1997-2000. These resources enabled the Special Unit to formulate a distinct programme beginning in 1997. The programme focuses on strengthening developing countries' capacities to intensify cooperation among themselves in strategic areas through exchange of knowledge and networking among institutions of the South.

12. In addition, $8 million were made available by the Japanese Human Resources Development Fund for the promotion of TCDC; $300,000 were provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Promotion of South/South Cooperation; and the Government of Ireland made a project-specific contribution of approximately $40,000. Actual expenditure during 1997 was $4.53 million; projected levels of expenditure for 1998 and subsequent years of the cycle are expected to adhere to this expenditure trend.

13. The above-mentioned situation is brought to the attention of the High-level Committee for Information.

Notes

[1] See E/1997/110.

[2] See TCDC/9/3.